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Assistant Director, OCD

2 November 1950

Acting Chief, Records Management Branch

The Records Management Program

1. The Records Management Program was established under the direction of the Library Division, OCD, 7 November 1949. According to the records of this office, however, it has operated as a portion of the Library Division, OCD, for two and a half years. Prior to that time it operated under various components of CIA, but never under a component whose primary interests were in fields related to records management.

2. The functions of the Records Management Branch are defined in Administrative Instruction [] dated 7 November 1949. The following are considered to be the most important, as they are the instruments by which the requirements of the Records Disposal Act, Executive Order 7754, Public Law 152, 754, and others will be met.

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a. Inventories of all files and filing equipment to determine the volume, types, filing arrangement, record character and retention periods for documents and the quantity, value, and effectiveness of use of filing equipment and space occupied by files.

b. Designation of offices of record at points of use to contain the record copies of documents.

c. Development of disposal lists and disposal tables for all file series to provide for the systematic retirement of all files no longer required by law or policy.

3. Executive Order 7754, issued 25 September 1949, required that an active, continuing program for effective current records management and disposition of records be established in each agency. Only some agencies responded to this Executive Order. Many, including CIA, undertook only token compliance. The continued lack of progress in the Records Management Program has resulted in frustration on the part of the current staff. This was expressed in letter o' 1 March 1949 which is attached.

4. The lack o' accomplishment cannot be attributed to any one individual or group, but to the circumstances under which the Records Management Branch has had to operate. In the first place, it is operating under a Division whose prime objectives are those of procuring, disseminating, storing, indexing, and servicing reference material. As a result of the extreme pressure placed upon this Division to perform its normal library service, its step-child, the Records Management Branch, has suffered, as is often the case when one function is placed as a subordinate to another high

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